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**322 Redwood Lane**  
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May 17, 1999

Mr. Lyle D. Jaffe  
Dockets Management  
Docket #98P-0203/CP  
FDA/DHHS  
12420 Parklawn Dr., #1-23  
Rockville, Maryland 20857

2536 '99 MAY 19 P4:35

Dear Mr. Jaffe:

Forced molting, a method used routinely in egg production, is brutal. Many of the hens perish. I urge the FDA to ban this practice.

When egg production declines, the hens are starved and denied water for up to 10 days. This forced molting shocks the hens into losing their feathers and starting a new laying cycle. Up to 25% of the hens do not survive the trauma and stress. Considering the many other hardships they undergo, it is no wonder so many die:

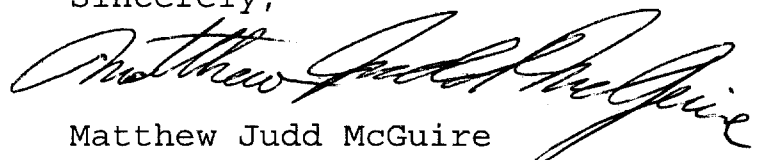
- ◆ Up to 5 hens are crowded for life in a cage with the floor space barely more than the size of a record album cover.

- ◆ Barely able to move, they strike out at their cagemates constantly.

- ◆ Most, if not all, birds suffer Caged Layer Fatigue, which causes the birds to draw minerals from their bones and muscles. Their bones become brittle, often causing them to break.

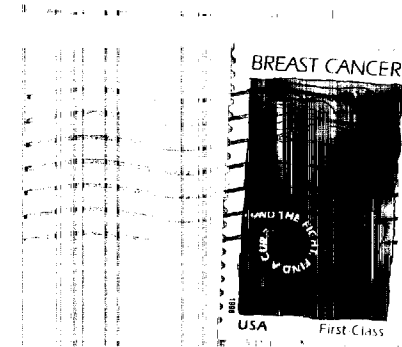
It may be difficult for the industry to think of a hen as something more than an egg machine. But it is a feeling being that deserves respect. Please help reform the egg industry by banning forced molting. I am interested in learning your views on this subject.

Sincerely,

  
Matthew Judd McGuire

98P-0203

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